

Keeping the tradition *ALIVE* in Arizona!!!

by Charles E. Blake

Every aspect of human life has foundations from which we thrive in creativity and ingenuity. We take for granted our freedom from which we spring board from for new opportunities, staples of our being. This is a natural process and overall leads to a better existence for all.

In the bottle collecting community, our foundation is that old gathering place for all collectors to come share experiences - those digging stories, wild auctions, or flea market finds - that place is the antique bottle show and sale. With the entrance of the electronic era, this tradition is waning. We are becoming computer chair potatoes, forsaking that tradition which enriched our collecting hearts.

We must conserve our rich collecting heritage. Continue to gather and educate one another on those collecting days of bygone eras.

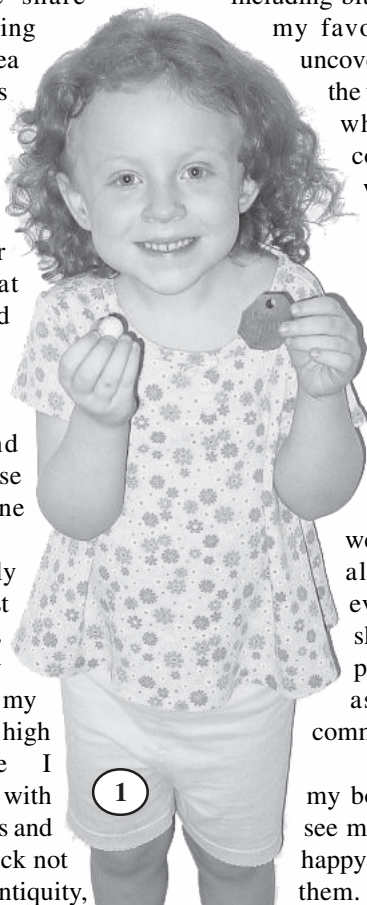
I remember in my early teens attending my very first bottle show and sale. I was a scrappy bottle digger only having limited success in my ventures into the Arizona high country. Every time I approached a table filled with bottles of fascinating colors and shapes, I was first awestruck not only by their beauty and antiquity,

but then most importantly, I was entertained by the unbelievable stories of uncovering these vast treasures.

I distinctly remember one older gentleman telling of bottle hunting in California. He had dug over 1,000 bottles from a dump along an eroding river bank. He would sometimes just show up after a heavy rain and pick up hundreds of bottles, including bitters and cures, which were my favorites back then, freshly uncovered in the mud. These are the type of collecting memories which have enriched my collecting interests and are what I believe are so vital in keeping the antique collecting atmosphere stable.

My club, The Phoenix Antiques, Bottles and Collectibles Club, is getting ready to host its show in October. I am elated that we are able to present this event and that we are keeping the tradition alive in Arizona. I hope everyone can attend. Come share your stories and help us preserve this important aspect of our collecting community!

Here are a few pictures of my bottle collecting past. Come see me at the show and I will be happy to share the stories behind them.



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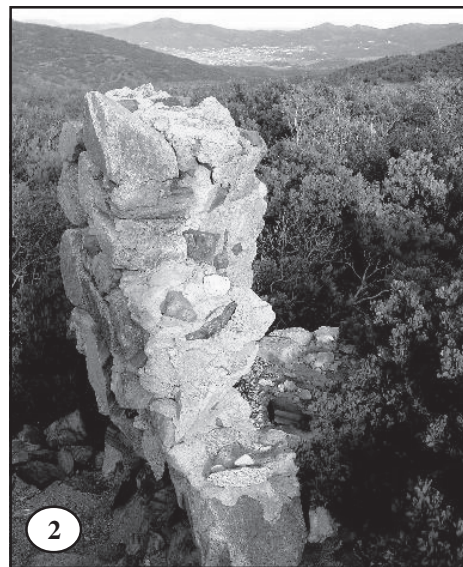


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Photos:

1. Daughter, Carolyn.
2. Ghost town, McCabe, Arizona.
3. Charles and Julie Blake.
4. Chuck Blake, digging an outhouse.
5. Son, Ryan.
6. Chuck Blake, metal detecting.
7. 2003 display of cobalt bottles.

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